

CITY

Austinites join national March for Science

By Lisa Dreher
@lisa_dreher97

Austinites in lab coats and NASA t-shirts marched on Earth Day from the State Capitol to support scientific research and education amidst budget cuts to research-based federal agencies.

The march began at the State Capitol and ended at Huston-Tillotson University. Rachael Livermore, a UT astronomy postdoctoral fellow who took part in the march, said curiosity drives human progress

through science.

"We have an insatiable need to understand the world around us," Livermore said. "That leads to new technology that improves our lives, and sometimes that just changes how we see the world."

President Donald Trump's administration has proposed a 31 percent cut in spending for the Environmental Protection Agency. In response, scientists and students across the country demanded climate change awareness and regulations through the march Saturday.

The Austin march was hosted by the Texas Freedom Network, a nonpartisan advocacy group that challenges the religious far-right. According to Austin Police, about 10,000 people attended. Several signs with the phrase "There's no Planet B" and "Science is real" rose above the crowd, and many wore shirts from their work in different scientific areas, from environmental research to computer programming.

Some UT students also wore "Texas Science" shirts

SCIENCE page 3



Emmanuel Briseno | Daily Texan Staff

Almost 10,000 people marched from the Capitol to Huston-Tillotson University in Austin's March for Science on Saturday.

STATE

Polls show that voters doubt Cruz reelection

By Forrest Milburn
@forrestmilburn

Over a third of registered Texans haven't decided whether to send Republican Sen. Ted Cruz back to Washington, D.C. for another term after his second-place finish in the Republican primaries last year, according to a poll released last week.

Cruz, elected in 2012, is either tied with or trailing in matches with two prospective Democratic challengers: Rep. Beto O'Rourke, D-El Paso, and Rep. Joaquin Castro, D-San Antonio.

O'Rourke, the only Democrat so far to announce his campaign, is tied with Cruz at 30 percent, while 37 percent are undecided in the poll. Castro, who said he will make a decision by the end of the month, leads the incumbent senator 35 to 31.

Statewide nonpartisan pollster Texas Lyceum surveyed 1,000 Texas adults on their thoughts on President Donald Trump's first 100 days in office, as well as approval ratings for statewide elected officials. For key midterm elections such as next year's senatorial race, the pollsters narrowed the surveyed group to 890 registered voters.

Although the Texas primaries are still less than a year away, pollsters said the survey was still worth testing how engaged Texans are so far and evaluating the base-level of support for Cruz.

"Here's a senator who's coming off of finishing second, but he did not win the Republican nomination," said government professor Daron Shaw, who helped oversee the survey. "He has taken on all of the hits and the baggage that comes with a bruising presidential run, and he's a Republican at a time when the Republican Party in Texas is still a little ambivalent about Donald Trump."

Last year, Cruz finished second in his campaign for president, capturing large electoral victories

POLLS page 3

CRIME

Campus responds to frat house graffiti



Mary Pistorius & Rachel Zein | Daily Texan Staff

The words "racist" and "rapist" were found spray painted on the pillars surrounding the Fiji house last Monday. Since then, similar messages have appeared on other fraternity houses in West Campus.



APD searches for vandalism suspects

By Catherine Marfin
@catherinemarfin

The Austin Police Department released a "Be on the Lookout" notice in an effort to identify the suspects in multiple vandalisms that occurred at several West Campus fraternity houses last week.

The fraternity vandalisms started last Monday morning when the words "racist" and "rapist" were graffitied on three stone pillars outside the front gate of the Phi Gamma Delta (Fiji) fraternity house. The vandalism continued last Tuesday morning when the Pi Kappa Alpha house was vandalized with the phrase "kill the frats." The same black graffiti appeared on the Kappa Alpha and Kappa Sigma houses Wednesday afternoon, when phrases such

as "up security like Fiji did" and "hang rapists" appeared on both houses.

Since the incidents were reported to the University last week, APD and the UT Police Department have been working together to identify the vandalism suspects. APD's notice includes surveillance video from the Kappa Sigma house and surveillance photos from the Kappa Alpha house. Both incidents occurred between 4:30 and 5 a.m., according to the surveillance images.

"The investigating detective ... specifically reached out to officers who work that particular area to make them aware of that incident," APD Officer Destiny Winston said. "That way, when or if they have extra time

APD page 2

Voices Against Violence reacts to graffiti incidents

By Kayla Meyertons
@kemeyertons

At least four off-campus fraternity houses have been vandalized in the last week with graffiti with messages ranging from "racist" to "kill frat boys."

The vandalism started last Monday morning when the words "racist" and "rapist" were spray-painted on three stone pillars outside the front gate of the Phi Gamma Delta (Fiji) fraternity house on West 27th Street. Other fraternity houses that were spray-painted included Kappa Alpha, Kappa Sigma and Pi Kappa Alpha.

Texas Interfraternity Council said in recent years it has worked to raise awareness for and address sexual assault by partnering with organizations such as Not On My Campus

and Voices Against Violence.

Peter Stanley, vice president of communications for Texas IFC, said in a statement Texas IFC strives to promote a safe, enriching and inclusive environment for all members of UT campus.

"The Forty Acres should never be a place for hateful rhetoric against any group," chemical engineering senior Stanley said. "We appreciate President Fennes' releasing of a statement on the issue, and we know that the University is working on this issue in conjunction with local law enforcement."

On April 19, Fennes released a statement addressing the original report of vandalism at the off-campus Fiji house.

"At the University of Texas at Austin, we will not tolerate vandalism and threats

targeting our students and are actively investigating the recent incidents near campus," Fennes said in a statement. "Many students understandably feel concerned and vulnerable. I want them to know we are committed to making UT Austin a safe environment for all students."

Mia Goldstein, Plan II sophomore and president of Voices Against Violence, said the focus should be on rape culture instead of vandalism.

"I think there are more productive ways to handle rape culture, (but) those who did it did start a conversation that's absolutely necessary," Goldstein said. "It's not solely the fraternities that are committing sexual assault, but they are contributing to the

VAV page 3

UNIVERSITY

Mark Smith appointed Graduate School dean

By Rachel Cooper
@rachelcoopa

UT will have a permanent dean of the Graduate School beginning Aug. 1 for the first time since Gregory Fennes was appointed University president.

The University announced earlier this month Mark Smith will be the new dean of the Graduate School and senior vice provost for academic affairs following

Marvin Hackert's service as interim dean since June 2015. Hackert has held the position since former dean Judith Langlois was named interim provost after Fennes' appointment to president of the University.

Smith is currently dean of the Graduate School at Purdue University, where he has been since 2009. Smith said the great opportunity for

DEAN page 3

RESEARCH

New powder expedites chemical testing

By Chase Karacostas
@chasekaracostas

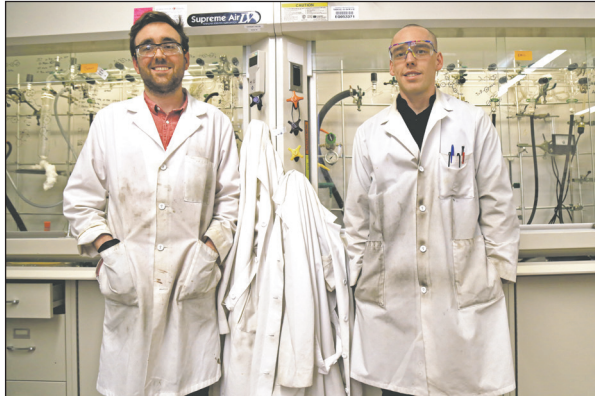
Chemists at UT are opening the door for medical advances after synthesizing a material that can drastically reduce the cost and time required for chemical testing.

The material called PCM-22 was announced in an article in the journal The Chemist earlier this month. PCM-22 is a crystalline powder that can detect close to 20 different chemicals including benzene, a malignant carcinogen found in crude oil and gasoline.

"We've constantly been surprised by it," said Simon Humphrey, co-author of the research and associate chemistry professor. "They're all pleasant surprises as you would expect ... and there's always some good fortune to synthesis, so it'll have high impact within this field for sure."

With PCM-22, the hazardous waste clean-up process only takes a few hours rather than the days or weeks it currently takes. Clean-up

CHEMICAL page 3



Betsy Joles | Daily Texan Staff

Samuel Dunning and Matthew Moore pose in front of a fume hood. The two are part of associate professor Simon Humphrey's lab group.

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Volume 117, Issue 145

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FRAMES

FEATURED PHOTO



Katie Bauer | Daily Texan Staff

Austin resident Kyle Hoover practices aerial silks in Zilker Park on Sunday afternoon.

The Texan strives to present all information fairly, accurately and completely. If we have made an error, let us know about it. Call (512) 232-2217 or e-mail managingeditor@dailytexanonline.com.

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TOMORROW'S WEATHER

High

88



Low

72

74 drinks a week

CHEMICAL continues from page 1

currently takes. Clean-up crews will be able to detect what they're dealing with on the spot and adjust their operation accordingly.

"If you can instantaneously know what you're supposed to clean up, then you know how you're supposed to clean it up to," said Matthew Moore, co-author and chemistry graduate student. "If you're worried about it being the wrong sort of spill then you clean it up the wrong way, and now you've created more damage."

In application, PCM-22 works by placing the material

in an ultraviolet light reader after it has bonded with the chemical that needs to be discerned. The color the powder turns is then used to identify the unknown substance.

PCM-22 is also used for sensing minuscule concentrations of ordinary water molecules within a solvent used in MRI scans, commonly referred to as heavy water.

Heavy water can be easily contaminated by air moisture or other sources of ordinary water, but these contaminants can make up as little as 10 parts per million. PCM-22 is helpful because it can sense these microscopic contaminants, and doctors

“ You work on projects, and you'll start out with these grand ambitions ... So, it is nice to see we have a project that has ended up with real world consequences.

—Samuel Dunning,
Chemistry graduate student

can determine the viability of using the heavy water before performing an MRI.

The powder can be printed onto paper and used like a pH test strip to identify chemicals. It's also inexpensive to make, allowing it to be cheaply mass-produced.

Samuel Dunning, a co-author and chemistry graduate student, said this was his first time

being published, and he was thrilled by potential future applications of PCM-22.

"Sometimes you work on projects, and you'll start out with these grand ambitions of how it's going to change the world, but then you'll see that it's not really feasible," Dunning said. "So, it is nice to see we have a project that has ended up with real world consequences."

APD continues from page 1

between calls, they can go through the West Campus area and have a high presence in order to deter anyone who might possibly want to vandalize the property there."

UTPD could not be reached for comment.

UT President Gregory Fenves released a statement last Tuesday on the West Campus vandalisms, saying the University "will not tolerate vandalism and threats targeting our students" and that an investigation by the Dean of Students was in progress.

Neuroscience freshman Paula Mofor criticized Fenves' statement and said the University has not done enough to improve the safety climate on campus, especially after Fenves released a System-wide sexual assault study last month that found 15 percent of female undergraduates had been raped since their enrollment at UT-Austin.

"I understand vandalism is illegal, but the rape culture propagated by that fraternity is rampant and the rape and sexual assault on this campus committed by our own students cannot be ignored," Mofor said. "Since Fenves tweeted about the 15 percent rape statistic, we've yet to see action. The safety climate, while I can't say there's skyrocketing incidents of physical violence, is poor."

Business sophomore Colin Christopher said the incident highlights the University's need to help the community, specifically female students, feel safer on campus.

"As a straight black male, I'm generally not at risk of anything like rape or assault, but this shows just how unsafe many women on this campus feel," Christopher said. "It's an outrage that women feel scared to walk home alone at night or go out and enjoy a night of drinking without being taken advantage of. We're prioritizing the safety and security of some over others and this can't go on."

Communication studies sophomore Samantha Gamboa said the vandalism has opening up further conversations about safety on campus.

"The fact that stats come out and say 15 percent of women have been raped makes me feel unsafe," Gamboa said. "I'm glad someone is getting a conversation started about this topic, even if it's in a more controversial manner."

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The Daily Texan, a student newspaper at The University of Texas at Austin, is published by Texas Student Media, 2500 Whitis Ave., Austin, TX 78712. The Daily Texan is published daily, Monday through Friday, during the regular academic year and is published once weekly during the summer semester. The Daily Texan does not publish during academic breaks, most Federal Holidays and exam periods. News contributions will be accepted by telephone (471-4591), or at the editorial office (HSM 2.120). Entire contents copyright 2017 Texas Student Media.

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CAMPUS

Radio show makes geology entertaining

By Jenan Taha
@Jenan_a_taha

“EarthDate,” a collection of two-minute radio segments from researchers at the Jackson School of Geosciences, debuted on Earth Day with 10 segments made available to stations and listeners worldwide.

The researchers from the Bureau of Economic Geology at the Pickle Research Center created the program to present the latest Earth science news in an interesting and understandable way.

“We hear on the radio and in social media so many stories about science that it’s often a conflict,” Bureau director Scott Tinker said. “We felt it was really important to bring modern science to people in a way that is fun and informational so that you can learn some things without having to debate.”

Tinker, who narrates EarthDate, said he wanted to create a program that could spark people’s interest in Earth science and make them more connected to the scientific community.

The segments, available on EarthDate’s website , focus on a range of topics concerning Earth’s wonders, resources, hazards and history. The first segment, titled “precious water,” talks about the scarcity of fresh water resources on Earth.

Juli Hennings, EarthDate’s researcher and content producer, said the program is a break from the usual complicated subjects on the radio.

“There’s a lot of news that’s



Scott Tinker, Director of the Bureau of Economic Geology, is the narrator for a new radio program, EarthDate. The program features earth science topics such as volcanoes and natural resources.

Courtesy of Scott Tinker

difficult to listen to, so we wanted to give people an opportunity to listen to some fun and interesting stories,” Hennings said. “They’re all meant to tell a story in terms that the general public can absorb. Even scientists might learn something.”

The EarthDate creators have marketed their program to hundreds of stations, including many NPR affiliates, and

have been picked up by dozens of stations.

Geology sophomore Mary Hoffmann said after listening to the first segment, she plans to listen to more of the program in the future.

“It was entertaining and fun,” Hoffmann said. “It put a lot of things in perspective and (gave) a different view that I never thought of.”

Thirteen to 15 new segments

will be available July 1, and the creators plan to put out the same amount of new content every 3 months.

Tinker said he hopes EarthDate will help people educate themselves about the planet.

“The Earth gives so much to humans that we just don’t realize,” Tinker said. “This allows you to see all the different things we depend on Earth for, and how to take care of it.”

DEAN

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collaborations with other programs and the Austin community drew him to UT, and his primary goal is to improve graduate students’ experience and education.

“The goal is to make UT Austin a preeminent international university so that when you say the word ‘university,’ UT Austin is one of the first names that comes to mind,” Smith said. “Every school in the country is trying to do this, but I think UT is really positioned to take a step forward in that regard.”

Executive vice president and provost Maurie McNinis announced the search for a permanent dean of the Graduate School in September. Hackert said Smith was chosen after a long list of potential candidates and on-campus interviews with four finalists.

“He’s a very impressive individual, very engaging (and) very energetic and I think he’ll make an excellent dean here,”

Hackert said. “I cannot imagine anybody stepping into this job that has more qualifications and experience to step into such a job (than Smith) ... he’s really honestly dedicated to improving graduate education.”

Hackert said Smith’s national reputation has made people take notice and Smith’s history of efforts in promoting diversity and inclusion makes him an ideal fit for the University.

Isabel Chou, incoming Graduate Student Assembly vice president, said she and incoming GSA President Kareem Mostafa look forward to working with Smith to highlight diversity and inclusion during their term.

“We already have great initiatives going on with the graduate school and we really hope that we will be able to get his support on those that we want to continue,” said Chou, an educational administration graduate student. “We’re also looking forward to his new perspective and experience that he’s going to bring into our team.”



Courtesy of Mark Smith

Mark Smith will become dean of the Graduate School and senior vice provost for academic affairs on Aug. 1. Smith succeeds Marvin Hackert, who served as interim dean since June 2015.

SCIENCE

continues from page 1

to support the College of Natural Sciences. Public health junior Alex Bruns said defunding the EPA would allow oil and gas companies to contaminate the water without government regulation.

“(The administration is) essentially taking away a lot of environmental safety, such as water,” Bruns said. “By reducing the amount of EPA funding, you’re essentially creating more opportunity for fracking and more pipelines to be built because they can’t enforce and restrict and save land.”

Administrator of the EPA Scott Pruitt, who was nominated by Trump, attended the Earth Day Texas event in Dallas on Friday. Protesters shouted at Pruitt during an onstage talk with Texas Railroad Commissioner Ryan Sitton, accusing Pruitt of stripping the EPA.

Stephen Russell, chair of the Human Development & Family Sciences department at UT, said at the march in Austin that budget cuts short-change already underfunded scientific programs.

“The degree of which science is engaged with policy and programs ... is huge,” Russell



Joshua Guerra | Daily Texan Staff

Many gathered to rally and march on Earth Day from the Texas State Capitol to Huston-Tillotson University on Saturday afternoon. They marched to support scientific research and funding.

said. “It’s a system that affects one another, and so I’m worried (that) science-based program funding, programs that make a difference for health and well-being, will be cut in the name of saving funding.”

The march also emphasized science education in support of teaching evolution and a need for more women and people of color in the field.

Chemical engineering junior Pranab Sachithanandan said students feel more

confident when they see someone of their own background leading scientific research and education.

“It’s good to have diversity across gender and across race because it helps young kids identify with someone,” Sachithanandan said. “It’s good to have more Hispanic and more African-American voices in science.”

Livermore said defunding scientific research restricts access to those who may not

otherwise be able to afford an education or the resources to follow their passion in the field.

“How many Newtons and Einsteins have we missed out on because they were born in the wrong place, without the right money or without the right connections?” Livermore said. “Science and humanity as a whole benefits when everyone is able to contribute their best talents to the world.”

CAMPUS

Facebook surveys irk statistics professors

By London Gibson
@londongibson

As the semester draws to a close, students in statistics classes have taken to Facebook as an easy way of accumulating responses for project surveys — and some are offering money in return.

Student Facebook groups have seen an influx of students posting surveys and offering monetary compensation for student responses, a trend that irks some statistics professors.

“I do not approve of financial incentives, nor do I think they are necessary to collect data for our very small sample size requirements,” Kristin Harvey, a UT statistics and data science lecturer, said in an email.

Harvey said offering incentives for survey responses is a problem that surfaced this semester, and she is working to ensure it will not continue in the future.

Harvey said only a very small portion of students completing statistics projects use money as an incentive for survey responses. She also said, as a professor, she doesn’t want students spending money to complete class work.

Advertising sophomore Afzaa Prasla said a class project is not worth spending money for. Prasla, who is in a market analysis statistics class, said she posted her survey on Facebook and got more than enough responses without

offering compensation. “I literally got like 50 people to answer in less than 10 minutes,” Prasla said. “It was really effective and really quick.”

Finance junior Michael Ngyuen also said Facebook is a good resource for getting survey responses. Ngyuen, who is looking to open a Sonic franchise near campus, posted a survey on interest and foot traffic in the area on Facebook and offered \$30 to a randomly drawn responder.

Ngyuen, whose survey was for personal data collection, received over 400 responses, which he said made the money well worth it.

“That’s 400 data points that I’ve acquired for 30 bucks,” Ngyuen said. “I’ve got each of those data points for less than 10 cents.”

Offering compensation for survey responses doesn’t interfere with the integrity of the results in general, Harvey said. However, the act of posting a survey on Facebook garners biases for the data, which students are required to address when submitting their projects.

Harvey said offering financial incentives is not uncommon in research, as many labs tend to offer reimbursement in exchange for study volunteers or responders.

“This is a common research practice,” Harvey said. “Whether that is good or bad for research is a much larger issue.”

POLLS

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in crucial states such as Iowa and Texas. However, the Texas senator infuriated many in the Republican Party by taking too long to endorse Trump before he went head-to-head with Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton, Shaw said.

The Texas Lyceum poll shows Cruz may need to spend some time repairing his reputation back home to gain the support of undecided voters, many of whom are disenchanted conservatives, Shaw said.

Among all Texas adults, a group that skews more demographically favorable to Democrats when compared to registered Texas adults, a majority has unfavorable opinions of Trump during his first 100 days in office, at 54 to 42 percent.

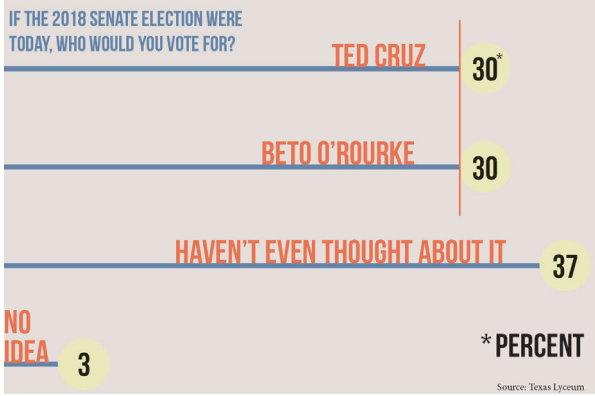
Despite the president’s underwater numbers, Shaw cautioned that they are what would be expected across party lines, with 86 percent of Texas Republicans approving of

Trump’s tenure, and Texas Democrats disapproving at 85 percent.

Government professor Joshua Blank is a manager of polling and research with the Texas Politics Project, who helped oversee the Texas Lyceum poll. Although Trump’s approval ratings are underwater among Texas adults, Blank said he expects the numbers to be closer among registered and likely voters, who lean more Republican.

“If the electorate looks compositionally similar to what it looks like in most elections, then Texas Republicans really don’t have anything to worry about,” Blank said. “If it looks different, then that’s another story.”

Texans in both parties will first head to the polls on March 6 for the 2018 primaries, with the general midterm election on Nov. 6, when voters will decide on who will represent them in the Senate, as well as governor, lieutenant governor and other statewide elected officials.



Infographic by Elizabeth Jones | Daily Texan Staff

VAV

continues from page 1

culture.”

Goldstein said she thinks the history speaks for itself regarding the “racist” and “rapist” labels.

“Those are not labels that you want to have, but the proof is in the pudding with them,” Goldstein said. “I think with the history of racist parties and racist pledge rules and also just rape culture in general, like Fiji especially, is culpable for that, so while it’s not nice to spray paint, those are valid labels.”

Goldstein said her opinions do not represent the opinions

of VAV.

Alexandra Vanderziel, co-director and founder of Steps for Survivors, said she thinks the graffiti is a representation of what happens when survivor voices are not being heard.

“That’s what happens when sexual assault is not being taken as seriously as it needs to be,” business honors sophomore Vanderziel said. “When people aren’t feeling heard or listened to, this is how they’re going to feel like they need to make their voices heard and stop letting crime be pushed under the rug or not taken seriously.”

COLUMN

Resident apathy sustains Austin’s racial divide

By Josephine MacLean
Daily Texan Senior Columnist
@maclean_josie

“I didn’t realize people still had a problem with race,” said Tahnee Steele, an African-American woman who graduated from a high school that no longer exists.

“(At Johnston High School) they didn’t see color,” said Steele, one of thousands of teens bused across town to attend high school on the east side of Austin as part of a court order to desegregate schools.

“I really never felt like there was a problem, until we happened to go for a band competition at a school on the far, far west side.” Steele said, “We walked up, and there was a doll hanging from a tree in a noose, and it was colored black.”

Although busing ended in 1997, Austin’s racial divide has not been solved. In 2014, UT’s Institute for Urban Policy Research and Analysis found that Austin was the only one of the ten fastest-growing cities in the country to be losing its African-American population.

Although a number of structural inequities are responsible for this, the overarching factor in all of them is that white Austinites claim we support diversity, but when the time comes to go to bat for policies that would continue to break down our racial divide, we have failed time and time again.

This has bred a climate of “hostility toward African Americans,” said Eric Tang, African and African Diaspora Studies associate professor, in an interview with KUT News last month. Unfortunately, for a city that prides itself on being liberal and weird, we also suffer from an epidemic of well-meaning bystanders.

Susan Cook, who graduated from Johnston High School in 1985, remembers those in her neighborhood expressing a lot of negativity about their kids being sent across town.

“It was not about income, that wasn’t the

discussion that was being had,” Cook said. “It was about — you’re gonna be going to a school on the east side of town, and there’s gonna be a lot more ‘blacks and Mexicans’ — that’s what they said back then — and you’ve gotta be aware that these people are different.”

Many white parents evaded busing by buying property with a different address, lying on their school enrollment forms or putting their kids in private school. Since the discontinuation of busing, Austin’s legacy of segregation has returned through urban renewal efforts and the displacement of its traditional black community through the pressures of gentrification.

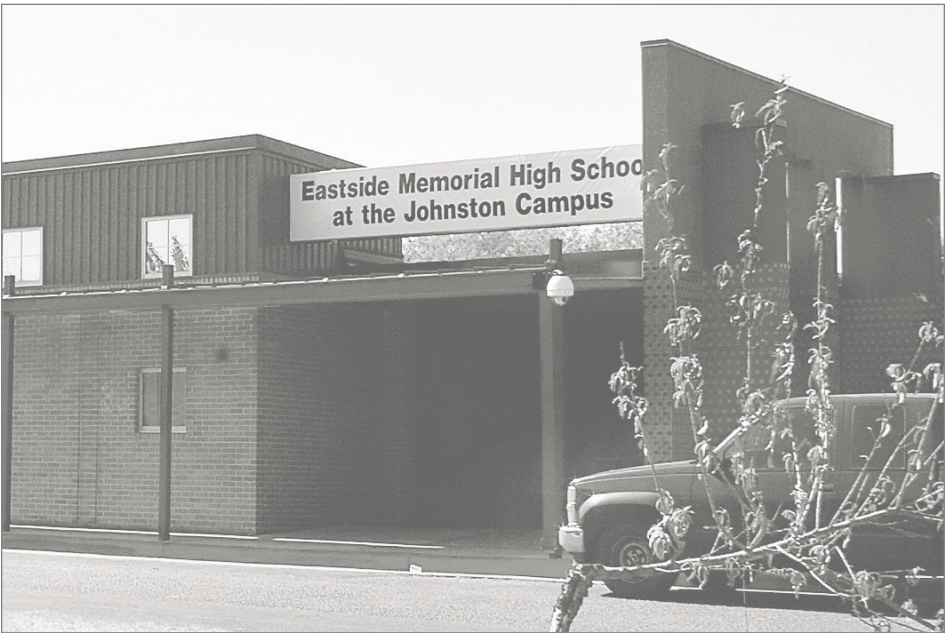
“Austinites can talk a mean game, but when it comes down to results, they’re not real good with that,” said Michael Attel of Johnston High School class of 1980.

Albert Sidney Johnston High, where Steele graduated from in 1986, is now called Eastside Memorial High and is one of the plainest examples of inequity in the Austin Independent School District. It has 97 percent minority enrollment and receives a 15.2 out of 100 on college readiness scoring.

I interviewed seven Johnston alumni who were bused from all over the district. Five identified as white or Caucasian, one identified as Hispanic and one as African-American. The general consensus was that being exposed to diversity in high school helped them in the long term, even if they didn’t realize it at the time.

Despite expressing the sentiment that diversity is a necessity, many of the white interviewees said they benefited from, or participated in, gentrification to some extent. It seems that, once they stopped seeing the way inequity affected their peers, it was easy to become a bystander to the re-appearing divide.

When telling me about the choices she made for her own child, A.J. Bunyard, who graduated in 1987, realized that, to some extent, transferring her daughter to Highland Park Elementary



Courtesy of Teodora Erbes

A car is parked in front of Eastside Memorial High School. Formerly Johnston High School, Eastside Memorial has low college readiness ratings and high numbers of black and Hispanic students.

contributed to the decline of public schools in Dellwood where they lived at the time.

“I guess I did what all those other parents did, so she wouldn’t go to the neighborhood school.” Bunyard said, “Putting it in context with my experience, I’ve never juxtaposed those together before.”

“As soon as they quit busing, (Johnston) went to shambles,” said Brad Koen, class of 1988. What happened to Johnston High is just one example of how Austin has reverted since the end of busing.

But what happened to Johnston High does not have to be what happens to the greater Austin community. There is still time.

In March, Tang told KUT he found something surprising in a survey of approximately 100 former East Side residents: A majority said they would come back to Austin if they were able.

In the 80s, the federal government required busing for desegregation in a political climate that’s not likely to happen again, so we must ask what Austin is willing to do as a community.

The map for Austin’s new zoning guidelines, Code Next, will be revealed this week. This is likely our last chance to step up to the plate.

If Austin chooses to reign in developers, set up programs that make it advantageous for people to stay in their family homes and actively build neighborhoods that welcome and value racial diversity, we can change our trajectory.

“I see what’s happening to this whole country,” Steele said, “the racial divide is getting bigger and bigger, and I just want people to care.”

MacLean is an advertising and geography sophomore from Austin.

COLUMN

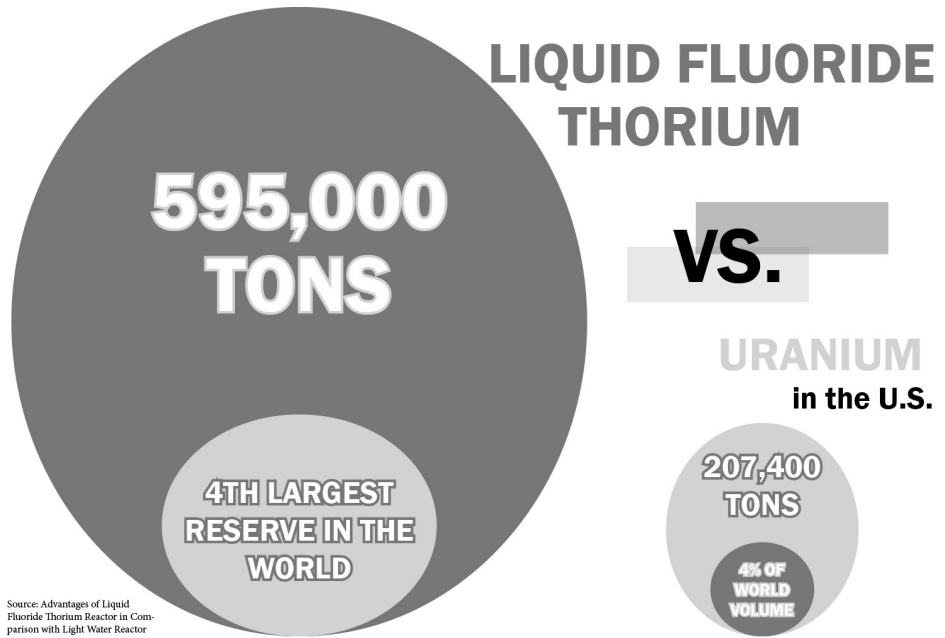
Thorium shows potential as safer nuclear energy

By Usmaan Hasan
Daily Texan Columnist
@UzzieHasan

Last week, Waste Control Specialists halted development of an Andrews County waste containment center because of concerns over flawed containment. The struggle for effective waste control solutions brings to attention one of the critical flaws of modern uranium-based nuclear energy: It is a high-cost endeavor which poses serious containment risks and dangers to the public. To assuage fear and prevent future catastrophes such as Fukushima, it is imperative that traditional uranium reactors be phased out in favor of liquid fluoride thorium reactors, or LFTRs.

Thorium’s namesake, Thor, is the Norse god of thunder and lightning. Despite the element’s tangential relation to hunk Chris Hemsworth, it has failed to gain traction in the mainstream. In the 1960s, Oak Ridge National Laboratory studied thorium and found that LFTRs are incredibly difficult to weaponize. As bomb-ready uranium technology enjoyed decades of unrestricted access to Cold War military dollars, thorium research fell by the wayside.

There are a myriad of concerns with nuclear energy, and as a result, there are only two operational nuclear power plants in Texas. The containment of radioactive waste produced



by uranium-based nuclear reactors, which is hazardous for at least 40 years, is one point of concern. And because nuclear reactors are essentially contained nuclear explosions, fear of a malfunction captivates the nightmares of communities living near nuclear plants.

Liquid fluoride thorium reactors will

change this.

The best part of a thorium reactor is its improved efficiency. Very little long-term waste and almost no short-term waste is produced. This means the necessity for sprawling waste-containment solutions such as Yucca Mountain and Waste Control Specialists is significantly reduced.

Moreover, research has indicated that a thorium reactor is substantially safer than uranium fuel. For one, because LFTRs are inherently self-regulating, they naturally reduce the risk of a meltdown. The mechanics of thorium salts mean that the higher the temperature of the nuclear core gets, the less “explosions” occur. While an out-of-control reaction in a traditional uranium plant core would be amplified, this is not a concern in a thorium alternative.

In light of these facts, China is now leading the charge for new nuclear technology. It has announced plans to commercially deploy LFTRs by 2030 using the data first collected by Oak Ridge in 1969. It seems strange that the United States has the 5th-greatest number of thorium deposits and the 2nd-largest thorium reserves yet has failed to seriously pursue LFTR technology. The existence of \$73 billion of short-sighted subsidies for nuclear weapons means the U.S. is now losing the war for better technology.

In an industry crowded out by selective investments, thorium will never see the light of day without aggressive support. Failing to back viable thorium means an antiquated energy infrastructure that threatens to poison places such as Andrews County and the ground we store waste in.

Hasan is a business and international relations and global studies freshman from Plano.

COLUMN

Democratic Party must accept varied viewpoints

By Noah M. Horwitz
Daily Texan Senior Columnist
@NmHorwitz

After last year’s presidential election, I openly asked where Democrats should go from here. Dedicated readers of this column will recall my pointed — and at times caustic — preference for Hillary Clinton over Bernie Sanders in last year’s Democratic presidential primary.

Sadly, the divisions underscoring that primary did not heal in time for the general election, which foreshadowed the Republican win. And there are an increasing number of signs that the wound still festers and could hobble any attempts at Democratic or more inclusive, anti-Trump, cohesion in the short and long-term future.

After the election, Clinton retreated into the woods. With former President Barack Obama swimming somewhere in Polynesia, Sanders has become the most recognizable face of the Democratic Party that still contributes in any meaningful way to the national dialogue.

To put it lightly, he has angered lots of his

ostensible compatriots in the past weeks.

First, Sanders flaked on supporting Jon Ossoff, the Democrat running in a special election for a Congressional seat outside of Atlanta. The moderate, who is running what could only generously be described as an uphill battle, was dressed down by Sanders, who made a point of deriding the supposed lack of progressivism in some Democrats; however, Sanders later endorsed Ossoff.

Next, Sanders caught flak from many for endorsing Heath Mello, a state legislator in Nebraska running to be the mayor of Omaha. Nebraska’s unicameral legislature is officially non-partisan, though Mello is widely known to be a Democrat. This enraged many on the left, as Mello has a history of pushing for an anti-abortion agenda.

The flare-up that accompanied these two incidents surely exposes some hypocrisy on the part of Sanders. But it also exposes that same hypocrisy on the part of many who find themselves on the “Clinton-wing” of the party.

To say that the Democrats lack any power nationwide would be a laughable

“

It was three long years ago when I said in the pages of this newspaper that ‘purity tests stink in general but they are especially rancid when applied arbitrarily and capriciously among candidates.’

understatement. Republicans control the presidency, Congress, the Supreme Court and the vast majority of state governments and local offices and judiciaries, but Democrats get the California attorney general’s office!

Running retreads of Hillary Clinton will not reverse that trend. But attempting to force Sandersism down the throats of all of America does not appear to be a splendid idea either. Instead, the only way the Democrats will come out of the wilderness is to endorse candidates

with pragmatic positions to appeal to constituencies they are vying to represent.

Ossoff is not as militantly liberal on certain financial matters as Sanders. He wants to represent an affluent suburb of Atlanta, not Vermont.

Mello is considerably to the right of Clinton on the matter of choice. Nebraska is as well. Besides, the mayor of a moderately large city has no bearing on the composition of the federal court system.

It was three long years ago when I said in the pages of this newspaper that “purity tests stink in general but they are especially rancid when applied arbitrarily and capriciously among candidates.”

Both factions within the Democratic Party need to realize that not all of their compatriots agree with them on every issue. And if the Democrats want to be a national party again — and they’re not — they will have to accept representatives of diverse views.

The split between Sanders, Ossoff and Mello should be encouraging, not detrimental.

Horwitz is a first-year law student from Houston.

ALBUM REVIEW | ‘DEATH SONG’



On their newest record, The Black Angels explore psychedelic rock and everything it has to offer, creating a fun and engaging project.

Courtesy of Paradigm Talent Agency

Black Angels revive old style with new record

By Chris Duncan
@chr_dunc

One of the largest pitfalls musicians can fall into is the conundrum of debut albums — the shock factor and value of a brand-new group often makes debuts extremely popular amongst fans but can often lead to a sophomore slump.

Formed in 2004 in Austin, The Black Angels rose to underground indie fame by honing in on a dark and atmospheric iteration of psychedelic rock with their debut record *Passover*, striking a certain chord with listeners. Since then, the band has failed to match the hype

surrounding their debut and found themselves in a somewhat repetitive rut in their most recent releases. On their latest record, *Death Song*, the band re-centers themselves, welcoming in a new audience while redefining their band’s sound.

Kicking off the album with “Currency,” The Black Angels make it clear they aren’t going to tread water anymore. This track falls in place without hesitation, with lead singer and bassist Alex Maas taking on the U.S. monetary system with some of the eeriest lyrics in recent memory when he sings, “I can see currency how it always sanctions us, all these paper lives you’ve sold, there’s

no God in who you trust, print and print the money that you spend.” Accompanied by a droning low end and wailing guitars, this track introduces *Death Song* as a no-holds-barred record and builds hype for the rest of the project.

Continuing with their gritty, dark and mysterious sound, The Black Angels find themselves back at what made their music so lovable: blues-infused riffs from guitarist Christian Bland, thumping bass and wailing vocals from Maas and thundering drums from Stephanie Bailey. *Death Song* isn’t a progressive album, but it doesn’t aim to be. Rather, it’s a throwback to an older version of The Black

Angels with improvements in mixing and production, making their music more dynamic and engaging.

On top of increased production quality and a return to its roots, the group also explores their moody psychedelic sound, diving deep into certain motifs and moods — something they have struggled to realize in previous projects. Tracks such as “I’d Kill For Her,” a tune that criticizes blind nationalism, reinforces the band’s rebellious persona and diversifies the track listing of this record. At the core of each song is the fight between love and fear, often resolving in love trumping fear. Each song affirms this core

belief, leading Maas to conclude that we protect what we love at all costs. This isn’t immediately apparent on every song, but it makes the process of deciphering each word that much more enjoyable.

Occasionally, Bland’s words fall flat, such as on “Half Believing,” where he becomes repetitive to the point of self-parody. Another track titled “Comanche Moon” is sung from the perspective of a Native American fighting for their life, and it isn’t written well whatsoever and sounds like a sloppy poem from a hip and conscious 7th-grader. However, moments such as these are forgivable when the band’s instrumentation

DEATH SONG

Artist: The Black Angels
Genre: Alternative
Rating: ★ ★ ★ ☆

.....

takes over the song, creating an album that contains no complete letdowns in its track listing.

Anyone looking for accessible melodies and hooks won’t find it in *Death Song*. This record is made for listeners desiring a dark and occult atmospheric experience. The Black Angels may have lost their way after their debut, but with this record, it’s obvious they’re back and ready to re-emerge as a revitalized psychedelic rock act.

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BASEBALL | TEXAS 4-3 NEW ORLEANS



Junior Patrick Mathis gets a hit during Texas' 4-3 victory over New Orleans Sunday at UFCU Disch-Falk Field.

Joshua Guerra
Daily Texan Staff

Kingham seals series sweep for Texas

By Alex Brisen
@Alexxbrisen

Texas finished off the series sweep of New Orleans on Sunday afternoon, but the Privateers made things interesting. The Longhorns watched their 3-0 lead evaporate into a tied ballgame in the seventh inning of the final game of the series. Although the Longhorns didn't record a hit until the bottom of the fifth inning and finished with more runs than hits (3), a dominant closing performance from sophomore pitcher Nolan Kingham allowed Texas to escape with a 4-3 win, capping off a

five-game winning streak dating back to last Sunday. "We had a very good week," head coach David Pierce said. "We played solid defense, we pitched all week. (We had) quality wins, (we're) building a resume and continuing to do it." The win comes after a dominant 7-1 performance Friday night followed by a narrow 3-2 victory Saturday. One-run games have been the Achilles' heel for the Longhorns this season, but they didn't let that happen against the Privateers. "We know we've lost 11 one-run games this year," senior center fielder Zane Gurwitz said. "And you can

take that in a positive or a negative way. The positive is that it shows we're one run away from every game we're losing, we're not necessarily getting blown out." The Longhorns made sure they didn't add to that number this weekend. Texas found itself on the right end of two one-run games against New Orleans, including Sunday's 4-3 win. Junior Kyle Johnston got off to a good start on the mound. The right-hander threw a shutout until the sixth inning, then the Privateers battled back, ending Johnston's afternoon after giving up two runs on four hits, two walks and three

strikeouts in 5.2 innings. Sophomore Chase Shugart took the mound for less than one inning and gave up one run, bringing the game to a 3-3 tie. However, once sophomore Nolan Kingham got on the mound, New Orleans' three-run comeback came to a screeching halt. Kingham, who's usually a starter for Texas, didn't give up a single run in his dominant 2.2-inning performance. "That's why he's our Friday night starter," Pierce said. "He's just got some great stuff. ... He's a great contributor for us, and I liked him in that role today." With the score knotted at

3-3, the Longhorns put together a timely response in the bottom of the seventh. With runners on second and third, junior Patrick Mathis sent a shot to left field for an RBI sac fly, which put Texas up 4-3. This time, the lead was for good. The Longhorns prepare for a neutral matchup with Louisiana Lafayette in Sugar Land, Texas, appearing to have found their rhythm in the late stages of the season. "Everything's coming together," Mathis said. "I'm really excited. ... I feel like we're really about to click and get hot, and it's going to be fun."

MEN'S TENNIS

Longhorns struggle against Horned Frogs

By Justin Martinez
@JustJustin96

The No. 7 Longhorns (19-7) entered Fort Worth on Saturday with hopes of ending their regular season with a statement victory over No. 9 TCU. But those hopes never materialized as the Horned Frogs dismantled Texas, 4-1, to win their second-straight Big 12 regular season title. The Longhorns showed signs of improvement in doubles play, keeping pace with TCU early on. The Horned Frogs eventually pulled away, earning a pair of 6-4 wins in the first two matches to take a 1-0 lead. "We did a lot of good things early on," head coach Michael Center said. "I thought we played some better doubles today, but TCU is playing as good or better than anyone in the country right now." Junior Trevor Johnson extended TCU's lead to 2-0 with a 6-3, 6-3 win over junior John Mee that ignited the home crowd. Things didn't get any easier for Texas in singles play as TCU won five of the first six sets to take a firm grasp of the match. Freshman Christian Sigsgaard, ranked No. 25

in the nation, struggled in his match at first singles. The Dane lost at the hands of No. 2 junior Cameron Norrie 6-2, 7-5, which gave the Horned Frogs a commanding 3-0 lead. The Longhorns finally got on the board when sophomore Rodrigo Banzer defeated sophomore Reese Stalder 6-2, 7-6, but the celebrations from the burnt orange sideline didn't last long. TCU's sophomore Alex Rybakov silenced any thought of a comeback with a 6-4, 7-6 victory over sophomore Harrison Scott to secure the 4-1 victory and claim the Big 12 title. "TCU was really good today," Center said. "They deserved to win the match after going (unbeaten) through conference play." The Longhorns end their season with a 2-3 record in conference play. Their focus now shifts to the postseason as they prepare for the Big 12 Championships on Thursday in Norman, Oklahoma. "The next stage of the season begins, and it's time to get ready for postseason play," Center said. "TCU played well, but I'm really encouraged. I think we're in good shape going into the postseason."



Juan Figueroa | Daily Texan Staff
Freshman Christian Sigsgaard has been reliable for the Longhorns this season. He ranks No. 25 in the country.

SOFTBALL | IOWA STATE 4-2 TEXAS



Katie Bauer | Daily Texan Staff
Senior shortstop Devon Tunning eyes a ball during Texas' home series against Iowa State. The Longhorns lost 2nd in the series.

Errors haunt Longhorns in 2-1 series loss to Iowa State

By Leah Vann
@Vanntastic_Leah

Iowa State earned more conference wins this weekend in Austin than they have all season. The Longhorns lost their three-game series against the Cyclones with a 4-2 defeat Sunday. Iowa State came into the weekend with just one Big 12 victory. Junior pitcher Paige von Sprecken started on the mound for the Longhorns, pitching five innings and allowing eight hits and two earned runs. Consecutive singles put the Cyclones on base early in the first inning. A Texas error put another runner on base, but senior shortstop Devon Tunning connected with freshman infielder Kaitlyn Slack to tag the runner at second. Tunning watched as a grounder bounced and escaped her legs, giving the

Cyclones a 2-0 lead. "Offensively, they were tough outs," head coach Connie Clark said. "They were able to execute the short game if they wanted to." In the bottom of the first, senior third baseman Celina Felix was brought home with an RBI single from freshman catcher Taylor Ellsworth, bringing the score to 2-1. The Longhorns tied it up at 2-2 in the second, but that was the end of Texas' scoring for the day. "We need to be able to move runners from station A to station B to station C and then get them home and I think we were beat in that facet," Clark said. The Cyclones erupted in the fourth and fifth innings with help from Texas errors. Freshman Megan Schweitzer blasted a double to get on base and freshman Telyn Lewis brought

Schweitzer home to take a 3-2 lead. In the fifth, von Sprecken walked junior infielder Nychole Antillon. A sac fly brought her home, giving the Cyclones a 4-2 lead. "I know nobody is trying to make errors," Clark said. "But we just didn't take care of the ball defensively, so we gave them so much extra momentum." Sophomore pitcher Brooke Bolinger stepped in with hopes of a save, but the damage was already done. "I think team 2017 — their legacy is still out in front of them," Clark said. "You have to really reach deep and figure out, are you gonna keep plugging forward, keep competing and keep working it even when your back's against the wall? Or have a pity party and give up? The game is challenging at times, and we're in a challenging place."

SIDELINE

NBA

	CAVALIERS
	PACERS
106	102

	ROCKETS
	THUNDER
113	109

	CELTICS
	BULLS
104	95

	CLIPPERS
	JAZZ
98	105

SPORTS BRIEFLY

Texas wins Big 12 Championship

No. 23 Longhorns shined the brightest on the biggest stage of the season. The Longhorns won their first Big 12 Championship since 2011 this weekend and fourth in school history. Since tying for seventh place at the Allstate Sugar Bowl Intercollegiate on Feb. 20, the Longhorns have steadily climbed the ladder as the season has progressed — placing fifth, fourth and second in their past three tournaments. "Winning the Big 12 Championship feels great," head coach Ryan Murphy said. "It means we are moving in the right direction." Freshman Emilee Hoffman led the Longhorns at the conference championship, finishing the tournament in second place at 1-over par. This is Hoffman's first top-two finish since her win at the Lady Paladin in September. "Emilee has had a very solid season," Murphy said. "Collectively, this season, (she has) been fantastic." Junior Sophia Schubert entered the weekend with a wave of momentum and continued her success at the Big 12 Championship at the Dominion Country Club in San Antonio. Schubert led the entire field after round two, but fell four spots after a rocky third round derailed her hopes of winning the tournament. Senior Haley Mills, who finished tied for 12th, and freshman Greta Voelker, who finished 26th, were also major contributors to Texas' victory. Senior Julia Beck rounded out Texas' winning effort, with a 31st-place finish. Murphy hopes the victory will spark more success as the postseason continues. "It's hard to win this golf tournament," Murphy said. "I feel fortunate and hope it's the first of several for us." The team will learn its seeding for the NCAA Regional tournaments during the Golf Channel's postseason selection show on April 27th before heading to the tournaments in May. —Travis Hlavinka

DAILY TEXAN COMICS



Jeffrey

Hello! Welcome to "Advice Time with Jeffrey"

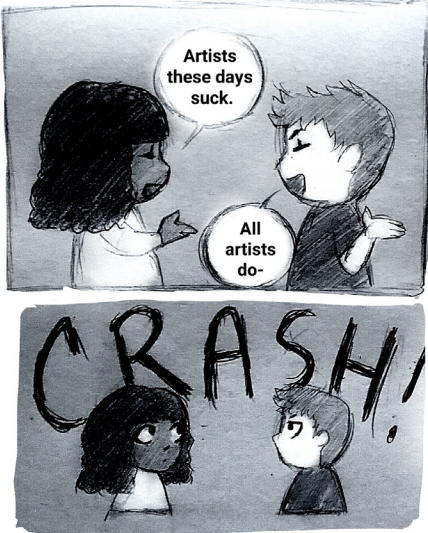
Today's advice: want more free time? Just never do any work! Opens your schedule right up.

Thanks for listening. Tune in next time!*

*WARNING: Any consequences due to following the advice given by this program is entirely the fault of the acting person(s). Jeffrey™ holds no responsibility.

by L. Moyer

X.S. BOOM



Art Ninja



OH BOY



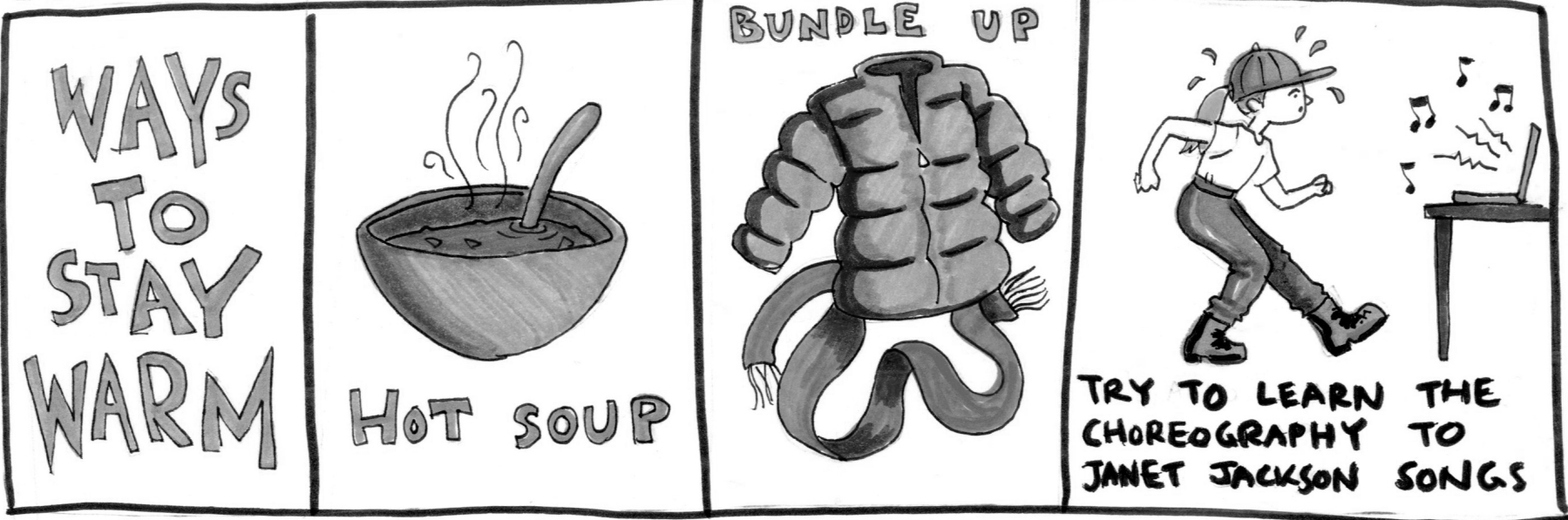
MUYU

STUFF AND THINGS



GEO

MILKSOPS



Rachel YL'17

Always Hoodie Season

You Got This!



Victoria Smith 2017

Today's solution will appear here next issue

SUDOKUFORYOU

3	2			5		8
				7	3	9
6						3
	4		2			
7	6	5	1			
	5	6		3	7	
8	9	1	7	4		
4						7
6	1	3	9			5

5	6	2	1	9	7	4	3	8
3	1	7	5	4	8	2	6	9
4	9	8	6	2	3	7	1	5
7	2	4	9	8	6	3	5	1
1	3	6	2	5	4	9	8	7
8	5	9	3	7	1	6	4	2
9	8	3	7	6	5	1	2	4
2	4	1	8	3	9	5	7	6
6	7	5	4	1	2	8	9	3

The New York Times Crossword

Edited by Will Shortz No. 0320

CELEBRITY PUZZLE

To mark the 75th anniversary of the New York Times crossword, which debuted in 1942, we are publishing a series of puzzles created by famous people who solve the Times crossword, working together with regular Times puzzle contributors.

This collaboration is by the astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson and his Harvard classmate Andrea Carla Michaels (with her 56th puzzle for The Times).

The celebrity collaborations will continue periodically through the year.

More information about the making of today's puzzle appears in the Times's daily crossword column (nytimes.com/column/wordplay).

- ACROSS**
- 1 Fix, as a cat
 - 5 "Get cracking!"
 - 9 "Jurassic Park" insect casing
 - 14 Pack animal
 - 15 "___ girl!"
 - 16 First lady after Hillary
 - 17 "That's my cue!"
 - 18 Like Dorothy's slippers
 - 19 Boston airport
 - 20 Toe testing the waters?
 - 23 Potentially dangerous bacterium
 - 24 ExxonMobil?
 - 28 "___ Comedy Jam"
 - 29 Command to Rover
 - 32 "Bald-faced" thing
 - 33 "Who goes there, friend or ___?"
 - 34 Bowling scoresheet unit
 - 36 Square dance site
 - 37 Oscar nominees' gathering?
 - 41 Vittles
 - 42 Manipulate, as bread dough
 - 44 Bird that hoots
 - 45 Mai (cocktail)
 - 48 Admit, with "up to"
 - 49 '50s high school dance
 - 52 Bashful?
 - 55 Inventory items
 - 57 Total hottie?
 - 60 Simple pond life
 - 63 "Me as well"
 - 64 "Voulez-vous coucher ___ moi ce soir?"
 - 65 It may be reasonable to a jury
 - 66 Catches forty winks
 - 67 Intertwine
 - 68 New Mexican pueblo builders
 - 69 Exuberance
 - 70 Regarding, in a memo

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

ETAH RAMPS GAME
HATA ATARI AMIS
LTRS MADETOLAST
LED SILLY VITAE
ONTHESLY JULEPS
DOIN CUMEUP
BASESALARY ERRS
ANT EMPTY FOR
MCALLISTER SOPS
ERIE RAPTOR
ASBESTOS PARTIII
SHO SAPPY LABAN
KEAN TRIOSONATA
MERE AANDP GLEN
ETDS SHEAF ELSE

DOWN

- 1 Wore an upside-down frown
- 2 Volcanic rock
- 3 Many, many
- 4 1983 film in which Barbra Streisand dresses as a man
- 5 Suffix with million
- 6 ___ poker
- 7 Equally large
- 8 E-commerce site formerly owned by eBay
- 9 Declare to be true
- 10 Native New Zealanders
- 11 Computer program glitch
- 12 Paleozoic or Mesozoic
- 13 Sought political office
- 14 "The Scales" constellation
- 15 Greek letter before omega
- 16 Quite a distance off
- 17 Neither's partner
- 18 Hamilton's bill
- 19 Body part to lend or bend
- 20 Big inits. in trucks
- 21 1,800-FLOWERS alternative
- 22 Certain fraternal order member
- 23 Place to dream
- 24 Successful auctioneer's last word
- 25 Commercial game with wild cards
- 26 Put in stitches
- 27 Having an aftertaste, as some barbecue sauce
- 28 Debate position against "against"
- 29 Have debts
- 30 140-character messages
- 31 Drivers' org.
- 32 John who wrote "The World According to Garp"
- 33 Reindeer feet
- 34 Most bizarre
- 35 1960 Alfred Hitchcock thriller
- 36 Abu ___ (Mideast land)
- 37 Prebirth
- 38 President who won the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize
- 39 "Ain't happening"
- 40 Finish second
- 41 Woodworking tool
- 42 Baseballer Gehrig
- 43 Rifle or revolver

CAMPUS

Environmental symposium promotes earth

By Matt Douglas
@thedailytexan

Following Earth Day’s March for Science, UT will provide green enthusiasts with another outlet for sustainability: The Future City Symposium.

From 5–7 p.m. this Tuesday in ECJ 1.202, the Civil, Architectural and Environmental Engineering department will collaborate with other UT faculty members to showcase an interdisciplinary approach to environmental issues. The second occasion of a two-part event, next week’s focus will be on the natural environment and feature four speakers: architecture professor Robert Young, history professor Erika Bsumek, geography professor Carlos Ramos and advertising and public relations professor Lucy Atkinson.

“It brings together voices from across campus,” Atkinson said. “My research is interdisciplinary, so the opportunity to chat with faculty and students from other corners of the campus is exciting.”

Maintaining the focus on sustainable construction, Bsumek will present on Glen Canyon Dam, a public project approved by the Navajo tribe’s government in 1956. The government used all the

land the Navajo offered but repaid only a fraction of the resources they initially promised. The topic sheds light on the engineer’s role as an indirect policy maker.

“Often, (engineers) don’t give a lot of thought to what’s going to happen to the people in the area, or the sort of larger social, cultural (and) political implications of these projects,” Bsumek said.

Following engineering’s role in politics, Ramos will then discuss his efforts to curb coral reef degradation in the Virgin Islands. These efforts will help locals maintain efficient market productivity while preserving a balanced ecosystem for the Caribbean Islands. To conduct his work with local farmers and businesses, Ramos had to gain historical and cultural knowledge of the region’s human-made and natural environments.

Ramos said scientists should be taking greater efforts to understand the social implications of applied science. He said marketing and representing science in a more practical sense can help appeal to the general public. His examples included the potential flooding of major cities such as Miami or New Orleans and the effect this would have on economics and

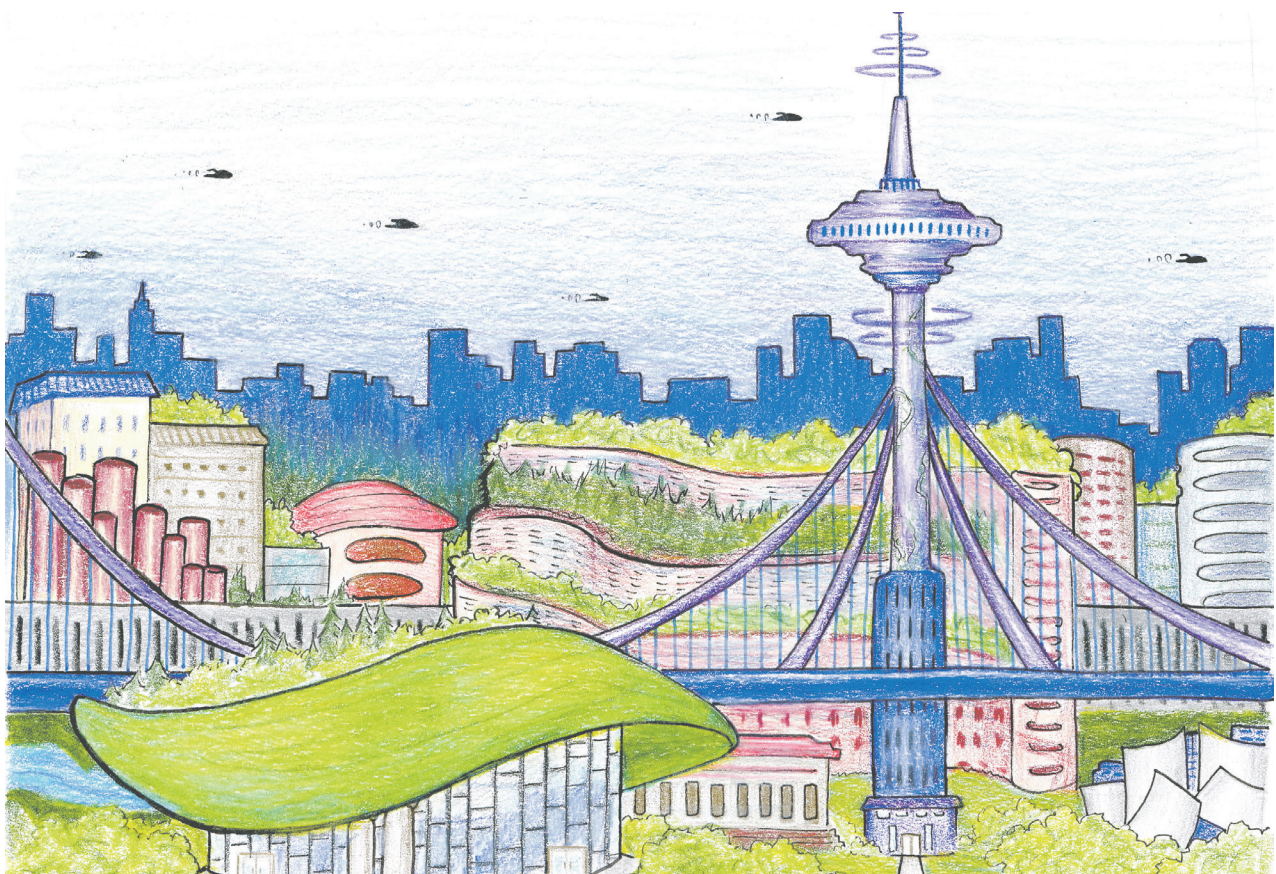


Illustration by Melanie Westfall | Daily Texan Staff

everyday life.

“You have to be able to explore other ways of engaging with the subject,” Ramos said. “It’s not just the numbers, not just the results and the papers, but there’s also an interest in the history of the place. That’s a way to connect to the subject on a different level.”

Continuing the theme of the environment’s ties

to society, Atkinson’s presentation Consumers and the Marketplace Respond to Issues of Sustainability will touch on subjects such as opting for organic food and fair-trade coffee, as well as deeper findings such as moral licensing, where people justify less than ideal choices because they’ve been “good” consumers.

“Some studies have shown that green consumers are more likely to cheat, steal and lie than non-green consumers,” Atkinson said.

For those with less knowledge in these fields, the symposium will provide a gateway to understanding ecological restoration. Ramos said it’s essential to address topics such as

the environment from an interdisciplinary perspective. By doing that, one can integrate and engage a universal audience.

“Sustainability is such a vital issue,” Atkinson said. “Events like the Future City Symposium help shine a light and bring attention to the ways we can help bring about a more sustainable future.”

INNOVATION

Chatbot combines technology with journalism

By Acacia Coronado
@acaciatree18

Texting has revolutionized the way humans interact on a personal and a professional level with one another. Now, the door to interacting with media organizations such as the Dallas Morning News through messaging has been opened through artificial intelligence.

UT’s journalism and computer science students have joined forces this semester to produce a chatbot for the Dallas Morning News entertainment site GuideLive that will answer questions, including what to do and where to eat, via Facebook Messenger based on GuideLive’s database and user preferences. Robert Quigley, journalism senior lecturer and Innovation Director for the School of Journalism, said the idea of a chatbot was first suggested to him by Vox Media COO Trei Brundrett and will come to life as a product of the “test kitchen” element of the innovation endowment from the Dallas Morning News

for the School of Journalism.

“Bots have become a hot thing for people who are experimenting with new things in journalism,” Quigley said. “Voice bots have been around for a while now, but text bots where you can actually just talk to a bot through text is a relatively new idea — it has only been around for a little over a year.”

Dallas Morning News managing editor Robyn Tomlin said this new form of integrating technology with journalism seemed like the perfect way to attract a new audience and innovate what they already had.

“We love working with the folks at the innovation program here,” Tomlin said. “There is so much cool stuff happening with chatbots right now, and we wanted to see what that would look like for us. We thought, ‘Here is an opportunity to take (this website) and give it another life and see how people engage with that.’”

Graduate journalism student Kelsey Whipple said the chatbot will learn

readers’ preferences based on the user’s Facebook profile and the questions posed by the user. She said based on demographic data of the Dallas Morning News’ GuideLive users, they decided to give the chatbot, named “Lucy” after the “Dallas” TV show character, the personality of their most common audience — a trendy 25-year-old woman.

“We want to make it easier for people to interact with the Morning News,” Whipple said. “So, people who are more mobile-friendly instead of desktop, or they only want events or they are on the go and don’t have time to find a computer, can just have a quick conversation with their thumbs and learn more about Dallas.”

Journalism senior Kylie Badgley, who is designing the chatbot’s personality, said she surveyed the typical responses of women in this age group and researched youthful quotes on Pinterest.

“I don’t really know how to sound trendy,” Badgley said. “But I made it sound



Alissa Jae Lazo-Kim | Daily Texan Staff

Journalism and computer science students collaborate on an innovative project that involves integrating the uses of Facebook into the local Dallas community.

like a 25-year-old. One example we were talking about today is if you type in ‘I want to go dancing,’ it will say something like, ‘Why be moody when you can shake your booty.’”

Badgley said this experience helped her learn a new aspect of journalism and

gain a wider perspective on the work others do at UT.

“It has broadened my horizons,” Badgley said.

Although they have yet to discover the full potential for the chatbot, Tomlin said she already feels proud of all that the students have accomplished in its creation.

“We were really excited with what we saw,” Tomlin said. “It’s still not 100 percent done, but I think they have built something that is very innovative, smart and funny. We are really excited to take that and figure out what other things it needs to be successful in our market.”

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